

What is claimed is:

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1. In a gaming system comprising a service station and at least a first gaming location, apparatus for enabling communication with the service station and the first gaming location comprising:

an interactive first communication unit operable from the first gaming location, including a first display visible from the first gaming location;

an interactive second communication unit operable from the service station, including a second display visible from the service station; and

a network arranged to transmit data so that messages are displayed on the first display and the second display.

2. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the first display comprises touch screen display.

3. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the second display comprises a touch screen display.

4. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the first gaming location comprises a gaming machine and wherein the first display is coupled to the gaming machine.

5. The apparatus of claim 1 and further comprising a keypad operable from the gaming location wherein the second display displays a message comprising data entered by the keypad.

6. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the first communication unit displays an image on the first display suitable for entry of at least one of numeric data and alphabetic data by touching the first display.

7. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the second communication unit displays an image on the second display suitable for entry of at least one of numeric data and alphabetic data by touching the second display.

8. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the first display displays a message depending on a preference of a player at the first gaming location.

9. The apparatus of claim 8 wherein the system comprises a central authority and a card reader, the card reader being operable from the first gaming location and arranged to read a code from a card entered by the player at the first gaming location, wherein the preference is stored in the central authority and

wherein the preference is accessed in response to the code.

10. The apparatus of claim 9 wherein the preference comprises a preference authorizing the player to be located, wherein the second display is arranged to display an identification of the location of the player in response to the code.

Sub A5 11. The apparatus of claim 10 wherein the identification of the location comprises a map.

Sub. B3 12. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the first display displays a menu of personal service available.

13. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the first display displays a menu of reservation services available.

Sub A6 14. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the first display displays a menu of personal message services available.

15. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the first display displays a message sent to the first display from the service station.

Sub A7 16. The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising a central authority, a second gaming location, an

interactive third communication unit operable from the second gaming location, including a third display visible from the second gaming location, wherein the central authority is arranged to transmit data resulting in display of a message on the third display and wherein the first display displays a message received from the second gaming location.

17. The apparatus of claim 16 wherein the message on the third display comprises a message received from the first gaming location.

18. In a gaming system comprising a first gaming location and a second gaming location, apparatus for enabling communication between the first and second gaming locations comprising:

an interactive first communication unit operable from the first gaming location, including a first display visible from the first gaming location and arranged to display a first message;

an interactive second communication unit operable from the second gaming location, including a second display visible from the service station and arranged to display a second message; and

a network arranged transmit data between the first and second gaming locations, whereby the first and second messages are exchanged.

19. The apparatus of claim 18 wherein the first display comprises touch screen display.

20. The apparatus of claim 18 wherein the second display comprises a touch screen display.

21. The apparatus of claim 18 wherein the first gaming location comprises a gaming machine and wherein the first display is coupled to the gaming machine.

22. The apparatus of claim 18 further comprising an alphanumeric keypad operable from the first gaming location wherein the second message comprises data entered by the keypad.

23. The apparatus of claim 18 wherein each of the first communication unit and second communication unit displays an image on one of the first display and second display suitable for entry of at least one of numeric data and alphabetic data by touching one of the first display and second display.

24. In a gaming system comprising a service station and at least a first gaming location, a method of

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enabling communication with the service station and the first gaming location comprising:

generating messages at the first gaming location and displaying messages visible from the first gaming location interactively;

generating messages at the service station and displaying messages visible from the service station interactively; and

transmitting the generated messages.

25. The method of claim 24 wherein a message generated at the service station comprises a reply to a message generated at the first gaming location.

26. The method of claim 24 wherein a message generated at the first gaming location comprises a reply to a message generated at the service station.

27. The method of claim 24 wherein the first gaming location comprises a touch screen display and wherein said generating messages at the first gaming location comprises touching the display.

28. The method of claim 24 wherein the service station comprises a touch screen display and wherein

said generating messages at the service station comprises touching the display.

29. The method of claim 24 wherein the first gaming location comprises a keypad and wherein said generating messages at the first gaming location comprises entering data from the keypad.

30. The method of claim 24 wherein said generating messages at the first gaming location comprises:

generating an image of at least one of a numeric input and an alphabetic input; and

generating messages at the first gaming location at least in part in response to touching of the image.

31. The method of claim 24 wherein said generating messages at the first service station comprises:

generating an image of one of a numeric input and an alphabetic input; and

generating messages at the first service station at least in part in response to touching of the image.

32. The method of claim 24 wherein said displaying messages visible from the first gaming location

comprises varying the displayed messages according to a preference of a player at the first gaming location.

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33. The method of claim 32 wherein said displaying messages visible from the first gaming location further comprises:

storing the preference;

reading at the first gaming location a code corresponding to the player; and

accessing the stored preference in response to the code.

34. The method of claim 32 wherein the preference comprises a preference authorizing the player to be located, and further comprising:

generating an identification of the location of the player in response to the code; and

displaying the identification at the service station.

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35. The method of claim 34 wherein the identification of the location comprises a map.

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36. The method of claim 24 wherein said displaying messages visible from the first gaming location

comprises displaying a menu of personal service available.

37. The method of claim 24 wherein said displaying messages visible from the first gaming location comprises displaying a menu of reservation services available.

Sub. B5 > 38. The method of claim 24 wherein said displaying messages visible from the first gaming location comprises displaying a menu of personal message services available.

39. The method of claim 24 wherein said displaying messages visible from the first gaming location comprises displaying a message generated at the service station.

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A12 > 40. The method of claim 24 wherein the system further comprises a second gaming location and wherein the method further comprises:

generating messages at the second gaming location;

transmitting the messages generated at the second gaming location to the first gaming location;

displaying the messages generated at the second gaming location in a manner visible at the first gaming location; and

displaying messages generated at the first gaming location in a manner visible at the second gaming location.

41. In a gaming system comprising a first gaming location and a second gaming location, a method of enabling communication between the first and second gaming locations comprising:

generating messages at the first gaming location and displaying messages from the second gaming location at the first gaming location interactively;

generating messages at the second gaming location and displaying messages from the first gaming location at the second gaming location interactively; and

transmitting the messages between the first and second gaming locations.

42. The method of claim 41 wherein a message generated at the second gaming location comprises a

reply to a message generated at the first gaming location.

43. The method of claim 41 wherein a message generated at the first gaming location comprises a reply to a message generated at the second gaming location.

44. The method of claim 41 wherein the first gaming location comprises a touch screen display and wherein said generating messages at the first gaming location comprises touching the display.

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~~45. The method of claim 41 wherein the second gaming location comprises a touch screen display and wherein said generating messages at the second gaming location comprises touching the display.~~

46. The method of claim 41 wherein the first gaming location comprises a keypad and wherein said generating messages at the first gaming location comprises entering data from the keypad.

47. The method of claim 41 wherein said generating messages at the first gaming location comprises:

generating an image of an alphabetic input; and

generating messages at the first gaming location at least in part in response to touching of the image.

48. The method of claim 41 wherein said generating messages at the second gaming location comprises:

generating an image of an alphabetic input; and
generating messages at the second gaming location at least in part in response to touching of the image.

49. In a gaming system comprising a gaming machine including a game display, apparatus for displaying graphics images unrelated to the operation of the gaming machine comprising:

a memory for storing image data;
a graphics display arranged to display graphics images; and
a graphics display controller arranged to generate the graphics images on the display in response to the image data.

50. The system of claim 49 wherein the display comprises a liquid crystal display.

51. The system of claim 49 wherein the display comprises a touch screen display.

52. The system of claim 49 further comprising a processing unit for controlling the transmission of the image data to the controller.

53. The system of claim 49 wherein the image data comprises vector data.

54. The system of claim 49 wherein the image data comprises bit-mapped data.

55. The system of claim 49 wherein the graphic images comprise non-text images.

56. The system of claim 49 wherein the graphic images comprise text images and non-text images.

57. In a gaming system comprising a gaming machine including a game display, a method of displaying graphics images unrelated to the operation of the gaming machine by the use of a liquid crystal display comprising:

storing image data; and

generating the graphics images in response to the image data.

58. The method of claim 57 further comprising a controlling the transmission of the image data to the controller.

59. The method of claim 57 wherein the image data comprises vector data.

60. The method of claim 57 wherein the image data comprises bit-mapped data.

61. The method of claim 57 wherein the graphic images comprise non-text images.

62. The method of claim 57 wherein the graphic images comprise text images and non-text images.

63. The method of claim 57 wherein the display comprises a touch screen display.

for the purpose of the prior art